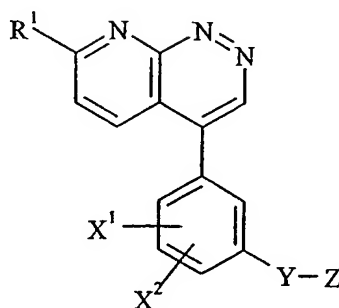


CLAIMS

1. A compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:

5



(I)

wherein

10 X¹ represents hydrogen, halogen, C₁₋₆ alkyl, trifluoromethyl or C₁₋₆ alkoxy;

X² represents hydrogen or halogen;

Y represents a chemical bond, an oxygen atom, or a -NH- linkage;

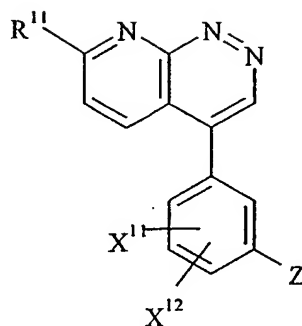
Z represents an optionally substituted aryl or heteroaryl group;

15 R¹ represents hydrogen, hydrocarbon, a heterocyclic group, halogen, cyano, trifluoromethyl, nitro, -OR^a, -SR^a, -SOR^a, -SO₂R^a, -SO₂NR^aR^b, -NR^aR^b, -NR^aCOR^b, -NR^aCO₂R^b, -COR^a, -CO₂R^a, -CONR^aR^b or -CR^a=NOR^b; and

R^a and R^b independently represent hydrogen, hydrocarbon or a heterocyclic group.

20

2. A compound according to claim 1 of formula IIA:



(IIA)

wherein

Z is as defined above;

5 X^{11} represents hydrogen, fluoro, chloro, methyl, trifluoromethyl or methoxy;

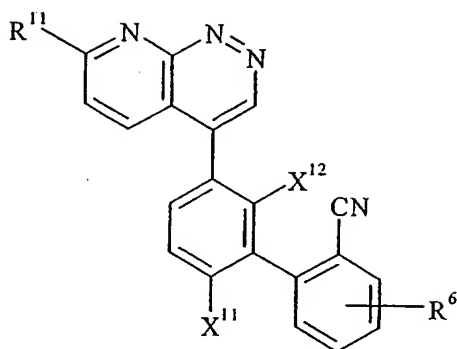
X^{12} represents hydrogen or fluoro;

R^{11} represents hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, halo(C_{1-6})alkyl, dihalo(C_{1-6})alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, dihydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, di(C_{1-6})alkoxy(C_{1-6})alkyl, cyano(C_{1-6})alkyl, C_{2-6} alkoxycarbonyl(C_{1-6})alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, heteroaryl, C_{1-6} alkyl-heteroaryl, heteroaryl(C_{1-6})alkyl, halogen, cyano, trifluoromethyl, formyl, C_{2-6} alkylcarbonyl, C_{2-6} alkoxycarbonyl or $-CR^4=NOR^5$;

R^4 represents hydrogen or C_{1-6} alkyl; and

15 R^5 represents hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, hydroxy(C_{1-6})alkyl or di(C_{1-6})alkylamino(C_{1-6})alkyl.

3. A compound according to claim 1 or 2 of formula IIB:



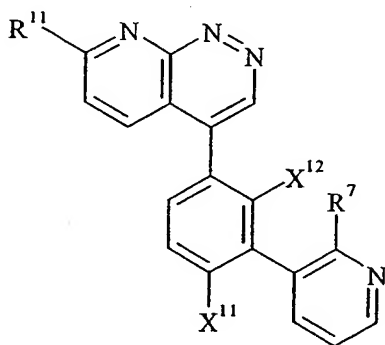
(IIB)

wherein X^{11} , X^{12} and R^{11} are as defined in claim 1; and

R^6 represents hydrogen or fluoro.

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4. A compound according to claim 1 or 2 of formula IIC:



(IIC)

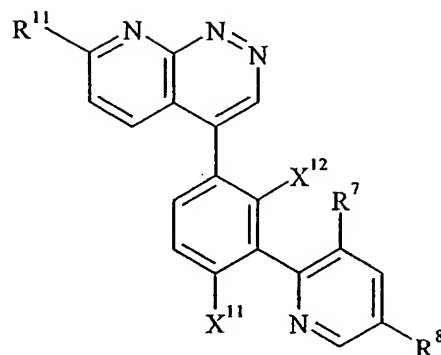
10

wherein X^{11} , X^{12} and R^{11} are as defined in claim 1; and

R^7 represents hydrogen, fluoro, cyano or methyl.

5. A compound according to claim 1 or 2 of formula IID:

15



(IID)

wherein X¹¹, X¹², R⁷ and R¹¹ are as defined in claim 1; and

R⁸ represents hydrogen or fluoro.

5

6. 2'-Fluoro-5'-(7-trifluoromethylpyrido[2,3-*c*]pyridazin-4-yl)biphenyl-2-carbonitrile and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

10

7. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to any one of claims 1 to 6, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

15

8. A compound according to any one of claims 1 to 6, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, for use in a method of treatment of the human body.

20

9. Use of a compound according to any one of claims 1 to 6, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, for the manufacture of a medicament for treating or preventing anxiety, convulsions or cognitive disorders.

10. A method for the treatment and/or prevention of anxiety, convulsions or cognitive disorders, which comprises administering to a patient in need of such treatment an effective amount of a compound of

claim 1, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.